

You Can Help “Foster” Our Future!

Deciding to become a foster volunteer through Loudoun County Animal Services is a big decision! You will have a positive and direct impact on the lives of shelter animals who need your help. This information is intended to help you to determine if the LCAS Foster Program is right for you, but please don't hesitate to contact us with any other questions you may have. Thank you for your interest!

Why Does LCAS Have a Foster Program?

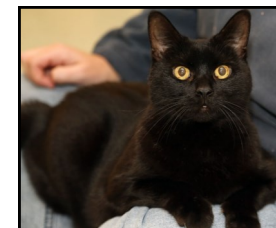
There are times when LCAS staff determine that an animal requires extra care and would benefit from time in a foster home. At the end of the foster period, animals are returned to the shelter where we evaluate their medical and behavioral status. Ideally, the animal is then made available for adoption. (LCAS animals are not adopted directly from foster care.) In some cases, the animal may require further treatment at the shelter or in foster care. The hard work of foster volunteers saves lives!

Who Needs Foster Care?

Kittens! Kittens must be at least 2 months old and 2 pounds before they can be adopted. Some kittens meet the age and weight criteria, but need socialization before adoption. This is one of the shelter's greatest foster needs. * *Additional training may be required to foster “bottle kittens” who require specialized care.*



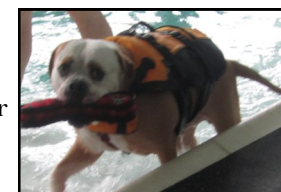
Adult Cats- Adult cats often take longer to get adopted than any other animal at the shelter. Sending an adult cat to foster care for a “vacation” can provide a needed break from the shelter and also helps the staff learn new info about the cat that can be helpful to potential adopters. This is one of the shelter's greatest foster needs.



Pregnant or Nursing Cats- The shelter can be a noisy and stressful place for mama cats. Having a quiet safe place to take care of kittens is very helpful. A mother cat and her kittens typically stay together in foster care anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks.



Dogs- Dogs are sent to foster care for medical treatment or recovery, socialization, or training for a behavior issue. (This is an infrequent foster opportunity.)



Small Animals- Small animals like hamsters, guinea pigs, or rabbits would typically be sent to foster care because the shelter is limited on space or for socialization and handling.



Are You Ready to Foster?

Am I able to transport animals to and from my home, the shelter and/or the shelter veterinarian's office? The shelter is located in Waterford and the shelter's contract veterinarian, Blue Ridge Veterinary Associates (BRVA), is located in Purcellville. You may have to bring your foster animals to one or both locations for multiple visits throughout the foster period.

Am I prepared for challenges which may arise, such as kittens who struggle to thrive, get sick or do not survive? We often don't know where foster animals have come from or what type of illnesses or conditions they may have been exposed to. We do the best we can for them with the resources we have, but please consider if you and your family are ready for the experience of the potential loss of a foster animal.

Am I able to separate foster animals from my own animals? For the health of all animals, it is best to keep your pets separate from shelter animals. An area with no carpet works best. When you bring home foster animals, there is a possible risk of illness transmission to your own pets. It is a good idea to consult your veterinarian if you have questions.

Will fostering fit into my schedule? Consider your day-to-day routine and assess how much time you have to spend with foster animals. The fostering period can last anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, depending on the needs of the animal.

Am I emotionally prepared to return animals to the shelter at the end of the foster period? It can be difficult to return a foster animal to the shelter. Remember that because of your love and attention, these animals in need have had time in a warm and nurturing home environment.



Y'all ready for this?

What Support is Available for Foster Program Volunteers?



- Advice and training is provided by LCAS staff.
- LCAS staff provides basic medical care for the foster animal.
- LCAS has a veterinary contract with Blue Ridge Veterinary Associates in Purcellville for routine care and emergencies.
- LCAS provides supplies including food, bedding, and toys.
- *Note: We do not reimburse for supplies purchased on your own or for veterinary care sought from a facility other than BRVA.*

The LCAS Foster Care Team Contact Information

Please contact us with any questions you have about the foster program.
Thank you for considering becoming a part of our foster team!

LCASfosters@loudoun.gov (703)777-0406

The LCAS Foster Program

Application Process

Step 1: Complete a foster application

Step 2: Attend foster orientation and receive Foster Manual

Step 3: A home visit is conducted to observe the space where animals will be kept

Step 4: LCAS staff will contact you when an animal is in need of fostering

